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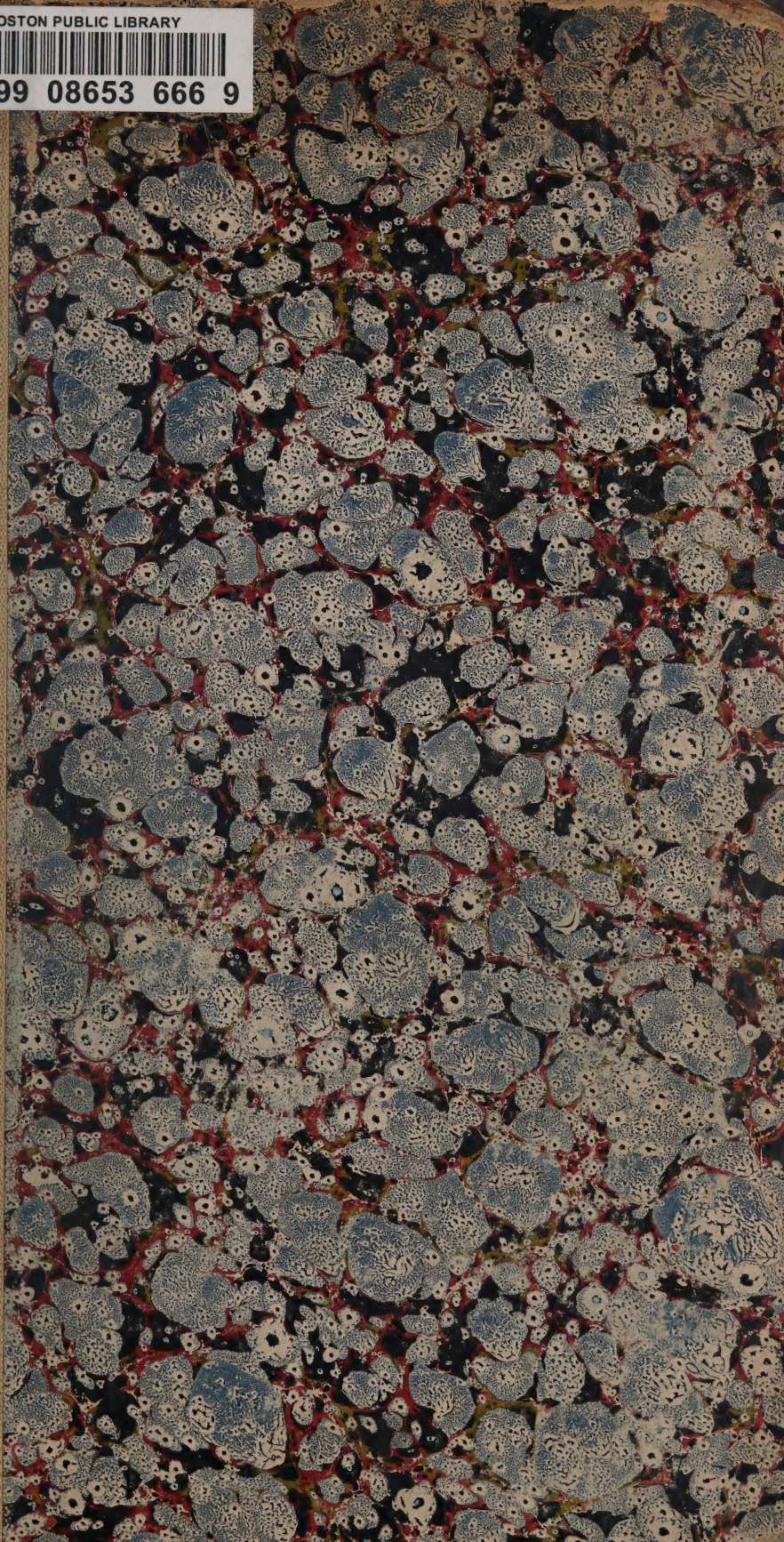

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"May Heaven's rich blessing come down upon every one who will help to heal this OPEN SORE OF THE WORLD." Livingstone's Prayer for the friends of Africa.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these." Matt. 25:40.

Conditions in the Congo State

Testimony from Many Witnesses

The Promise

"Our only program, I am anxious to repeat, is the work of moral and material regeneration." *Leopold II, 1885.*

The Fulfilment

"The inhabitants have fled. They have burned their huts, and great heaps of cinders mark the sites. The terror caused by the memory of inhuman floggings, of massacres and abductions, haunts their poor brains and they go as fugitives to seek shelter in the recesses of the hospitable bush or across the frontiers to find it in French or Portuguese Congo." *M. Edouard Pickard, Member of Belgian Senate, 1896.*

"Everywhere I hear the same news—rubber and murder—slavery in its worst form." *E. J. Glave, companion of H. M. Stanley, in "Century Magazine," 1899.*

"Upon the least resistance the men were shot down, and the women were captured as slaves and made to work. It was a sad sight to behold these poor creatures driven like dogs here and there, and kept hard at their toil from morning to night." *Semliki region. Mr. Lloyd, 1899.*

"Imprisoning 60 women and putting them in the chain, where all but five died of starvation." *One of the counts in the indictment drawn up against the agents of the Anversoise in the Mongala massacres in 1900.*

"Men are first applied for, and if they do not present themselves, soldiers are sent, who tie up the women or the chiefs until the workmen are forthcoming." *Rev. A. Billington, Bwemba, 1903.*

"M——, went to the factory and released 106 prisoners. We saw them pass our stations—living skeletons - - - among them grey-headed old men and women. Many children were born in prison. One poor woman was working in the sun three days after the child was born." *Mr. Ruskin, 1903.*

"This man himself, when I visited him in Boma goal, in March, 1901, said that more than 100 women and children had died of starvation at his hands, but that the responsibility was due to his superiors' orders and neglect." *Cyrus Smith to Consul Casement.*

"At the different Congo Government stations, women are kept for the following purposes. In the daytime they do all the station work - - at night they are obliged to be at the disposal of the soldiers. - - The women are slaves captured by the Government soldiers when raiding the country." *Katanga region. Affidavit. March, 1903.*

"In an open shed I found two sentries of the La Lulanga Company guarding fifteen women, five of whom had infants at the breast, and three of whom were about to become mothers. - - They said they were detaining them as prisoners to compel their husbands to bring in the right amount of india rubber. 'Why do you catch the women and not the men?' I asked. 'Don't you see,' was the answer, 'if I caught and kept the men, who would work the rubber? But if I catch their wives, the husbands are anxious to have them home again, and so the rubber is brought in quickly.' - - At nightfall the fifteen women in the shed were tied together, either neck to neck, or ankle to ankle, for the night. *Lulonga district. Consul Casement, 1903.*

"I met, in the Abir grounds, a file of fifteen women who were being brought in

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Feb. 27 1906.

from the adjoining villages. These women, who were evidently wives and mothers, had been seized to compel their husbands to bring in antelope or other meat." *Loperi-Maringa district. Consul Casement, 1903.*

"An old chief came up to where Mr. Harris and I were standing. 'Oh, white man,' he pleaded, 'do have our work changed. We do not want to work it but there is no longer any rubber in our district and my people are being killed for nothing. What am I to do?' I suggested that the inspector appointed by the King would no doubt come to Baringa and he could appeal to him. He asked how long it would be before the inspector would come. I said, perhaps two months; upon which he cried out, 'Two months; it will be too late then. We shall all be killed before that time.' And after we had left him we could hear him crying out after us, 'We shall all be killed! We shall all be killed!' " *Rev. C. H. Harvey, after visit to Baringa, 1903.*

1904 - 1905

So strong was the feeling in Europe that in September, 1904, King Leopold dispatched a Commission, two of whose three members were his own subjects, to the Congo. Fragmentary selections from the evidence presented to this Commission of Inquiry are given below. They illustrate its character but give no idea of its abundance.

"While the men are in the forests trying to get rubber their wives are outraged, ill treated and stolen from them by the sentries." *Mrs. Harris, at Baringa.*

"The woman Baoji, because she wished to remain faithful to her husband, was mutilated. Her footless leg and maimed body testify to the truth of her statement. Her husband told how he was *chicotted* because he was angry about his wife's mutilation." *Mr. Harris, at Baringa.*

"Sixteen Esanger witnesses gave details of how father, mother, son or daughter were killed in cold blood for rubber. The big chief of Bolima placed on the table 110 twigs each representing a life for rubber. The twigs were of different lengths, representing chiefs, men, women and children. It was a horrible story of mutilation, massacre, cannibalism. These crimes were committed by those acting under the instructions of white men. The white men, when the fight was over, handed him his corpses and said, 'Now you will bring in rubber won't you?' To which he replied, 'Yes.' The corpses were then cut up and eaten by Mon. Forcie's fighters. A little child was cut in halves and impaled." *Mr. Harris, at Baringa.*

"I knew of no village where it took them less than ten days out of the fifteen to satisfy the demands of the rubber company. The sentries atrociously abused their position and were never punished even for the most brutal crimes. Lokungu, my witness, had a string with 42 knots, each indicating a person killed at Nsungamboyo. He also had a packet of 50 leaves, each representing a woman seized by the sentries." *Mr. Gamman, at Bongandanga.*

"A list of over 60 murders of men, women and children with names of murderers, victims and witnesses was presented. The following illustrate the remarks accompanying each case:

> "Sentry demanded deceased's wife. He refused, was bound to a post and shot."
>
> "Rubber deficient. Sentry dug a hole and laid him face downward in it, then jumped on him, and beat him with stock of gun till dead."
>
> "European agent sent sentries. Mother killed. Child had right hand, left foot and part of foreleg cut off to get ornaments on them. Women shot. Children hacked with knives, etc. etc."
>
> *Mr. and Mrs. Lower, at Ikau.*

"I told them of the signs of desolation in all the districts, of the butcheries wrought by the various white men of the State and of the companies who had been stationed there." *Mr. Gilchrist, at Lulanga.*

"Another witness told how he found the corpses of his mother, uncle and sister, killed by the sentries. All had harrowing stories of the brutal murders of near relatives. Defenceless women and children were shot down indiscriminately to strike terror into the hearts of these unhappy people, to force them to bring rubber. While the men are in the forest trying to get rubber, their wives are outraged and stolen from them by the State sentries. This has been the normal condition for years. This sys-

tem is iniquitous in the extreme and if continued will end in the total depopulation of the country." *Mr. Stannard, at Baringa.*

"The son of the murdered chief took the corpse to the white agent and complained. He said the chief had been shot because the rubber was not complete. Before they went the agent called his dog and set it on them, the dog biting the son on the leg as he carried the corpse of his father.

"The sentries were sent to Bolongo for the rubber. The people had gone to the forest but had not been able to secure the full quantity. As a punishment three villagers were killed and another wounded." *Mr. Padfield, at Bonginda.*

Jan. 5, 1905. "While you were at Baringa a chief came to lay his case before you. He brought 182 long twigs and 76 shorter ones, representing men, women and children murdered in their villages. The people were killed by hanging, spearing, cutting the throat, etc. Many babies were killed with their mothers."

Jan. 17. "When they took what little rubber they could find, the white men only flogged them. They were now expecting the white man would come again and kill them. 'Tell them,' said one young chief, 'we cannot find rubber; we are willing to work but rubber is finished. Our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers have been murdered in scores for rubber.' "

"The young woman Imenega was tied to a forked tree and chopped in half with a matchete, beginning at the left shoulder, chopping down through the chest, etc. This was how the sentries punished her husband." *Mr. Harris (in letters to Commission).*

"Under the influence of terror entire villages hide in the bush at the approach of white men; - - natives are bound with ropes and chains; - - all aspirations for liberty are punished with the whip and hunger cure." *Dr. Eduardo Baccari, Surgeon General of the Royal Italian Navy (in report to his Government).*

(The Commission of Inquiry returned to Europe in March, 1905. Its Report did not appear until October 30, 1905. Recent information from the Congo indicates that conditions have grown steadily worse.)

Extracts from the Report of Leopold's Commission of Inquiry

"Missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, were unanimous in accentuating the general wretchedness existing in the regions. One of them said that 'this system - will, if continued for another five years, wipe out the population of the district.' "

"It was barely denied that the imprisonment of women hostages, the subjection of the chiefs to servile labor, the flogging of rubber collectors, the brutality of the black employees set over the prisoners were the rules commonly followed."

"The native must go one or two days march every fortnight, until he arrives where the rubber vines can be met with in a certain degree of abundance. There the collector passes a number of days in a miserable existence. He is deprived of his wife, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather and the attacks of wild beasts. When once he has collected the rubber he must bring it to the Station, and only then can he return to his village where he can sojourn for barely more than two or three days, because the next demand is made upon him."

"- - This interpretation concedes to the State a right of absolute and exclusive ownership over virtually the entire land with this result; that it alone can dispose of all the produce of the soil, prosecute as a poacher anyone who takes from that land the least of its fruits or as a receiver of stolen goods anyone who receives such goods."

"Apart from the rough plantations which barely suffice to feed the natives themselves and supply the stations, all the fruits of the soil are considered as the property of the State or of the Concessionaire Societies. Thus, although freedom of trade is formally recognized by law, the native does not own the objects which constitute trade."

"The consequences are often very murderous. If constant watch cannot be exercised over the sanguinary instincts of the soldiers it is difficult that the expedition should not degenerate into massacres accompanied by pillage and incendiarism."

"These auxiliaries convert themselves into despots, claiming the women and the food not only for themselves but for the body of parasites which a love of rapine causes to become associated with them; they kill without pity all those who attempt to resist

their exigencies and whims."

"If we accept Stanley's figures it is incontestable that a large part of the population must have disappeared, for from Stanley's Pool to Nouvelle Anvers, and even higher up, the banks of the river are almost deserted."

Some Belgian Testimony

"The work of civilization, as you call it, is an enormous and continual butchery."

"You went there with the pretense of saving the natives from the slave trade and barbarism, you take their forests, you forbid them to hunt and to collect produce, you drive them to military service and forced labor."

"The successes secured for the benefit of one person have been at the price of the enslavement of millions of men." *M. Lorand, in Belgian Parliament.*

"The King cleverly obtained possession of the Congo, and has become its Sovereign absolute.

The native population were deprived of their land and its produce, and became the property of the conquerors.

They were driven to forced labor, and compelled to pay scandalous taxes. They were forbidden to collect the rubber in their forests, which henceforth belonged to the King and the companies. They became enslaved.

Those who refused to work for their new masters were imprisoned, killed, massacred. Their women and children were thrust into hostage houses, where many have died of hunger. Villages were burned. Savage crimes, crimes which stagger the imagination, were perpetrated.

The history of colonization offers few examples of similiar infamies.

Leopold II has, thanks to this system, acquired a colossal fortune for himself in a few years." *Le Peuple, Belgium, Oct. 1905.*

"—The truth can no longer be concealed—notwithstanding the deep shadows in which it has been sought to wrap it. No Belgian who is a patriot will be satisfied that people should say that the Congo State is the land of slavery and tyranny, oppression and exaction, rapine and cruelty, illegal and forcible expropriation. To take away the land from the natives, to put the whole country under pressure in order to extract all the juice it contains—this is not colonization. This policy is bad; its results prove it. It should be changed, reformed, abandoned. The time has long since come." *L'ami de l'Ordre (a Roman Catholic organ).*

L'ami de l'Ordre states that M. Janssens, President of the Commission of Inquiry, before leaving Boma (Congo) publicly said:

"I came here with a feeling of confidence, expecting to find everything in order. I did not think I was about to come into contact with such putridity as I have found."

Would you help right this cruel wrong? You may effectively "lend a hand" by sending the Senators from your state and the Representatives from your district, some such letter as this:

To the Honorable _____

U. S. Senator (or Member of Congress) from

_____

Dear Sir:—

As one of your constituents, I take the liberty of writing to you in regard to a Memorial now before Congress relative to the situation in the Independent State of the Congo. I respectfully request that you will do all within your power to secure action by our Government favorable to an international inquiry with a view to authoritative adjudication of the issues to which those conditions are related.

Very truly yours,

_____

Your earnest co-operation is desired. **Address**

The Congo Reform Association, 710 Tremont Temple, Boston, Mass